



a view from the  
**WEST POINT INN**

The Newsletter for the West Point Inn Association and Friends

September 2021 • Issue 47

**Mission Statement:**  
*The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.*

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The newsletter is published with funds provided in memory of Lifetime Member, Ernest E. Emig, and Honorary Member, Harold Allen Atkinson.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Don Keeley**

Greetings West Point Inn Members!

I started the President's Message in the June Newsletter by stating "As spring turns to summer, it seems like the worst of the COVID-19 Pandemic is behind us". I think I may have been a little premature. California did fully reopen on June 15, removing capacity limits for indoor events and removing mask requirements for fully vaccinated individuals. Marin County followed the state's guidelines. As we all know, the Delta Variant has continued to surge and indoor mask requirements have returned for everyone, including fully vaccinated individuals. As you have read or heard on the news, these changing guidelines make it challenging for businesses to plan and operate, and the West Point Inn is no exception. Your Board of Directors is committed to opening the Inn to overnight guests and some fundraising events in complete compliance with all State and County Health Orders. Nothing is more important than the health and safety of our members, Innkeepers and guests.

Although the State and County removed all indoor capacity restrictions, we have decided to take a more cautious approach. The Inn opened at 50% capacity to overnight guests on August 3. There is no longer a 2-night minimum, rates have been reduced, and overnight guests now share the kitchen, Members' Lounge, Hikers' Lounge and deck. Masks are required for all guests when inside the Inn. We were planning to fully open at 100% capacity in October, but have decided to stay at 50% occupancy through the end of the year. The Inn and decks are only open to overnight guests. Reservations are now available through the end of December. Members get \$20 off per night in September, and 50% off in October, November and December. Please contact [reservations@wetpointinn.com](mailto:reservations@wetpointinn.com) for the member code, if you have misplaced the email.

Due to the pandemic, our last formal Work Party was held in February 2020. But that doesn't mean that the Inn does not require regular care. Fran Rondeau, Bonnie Jones and Lin Johanson have organized twice monthly "Mini Work Parties" to tackle some of the Inn's needs. They, and other volunteers, have worked on general cleaning of the Inn, rooms and cabins; washing the curtains; restocking the kitchen with pots, pans, dishes, silverware and glassware as our opening plans have evolved; and bringing pillows and comforters back to the rooms and cabins. The Inn looks great due to the work of this group and the Innkeepers.

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Continued from p1.

Given the extremely high wildfire risk, we have continued the work to maintain defensible space around the Inn. The West Point Inn Association is responsible for maintaining a 100-foot radius circle of defensible space around the Inn, and the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) is responsible for maintaining the defensible space within a 100-200 foot radius circle around the Inn. Several Innkeepers have put in hours of work, and the Mt. Tamalpais High School Football Team also spent time at the Inn this summer helping with brush clearing.

The Inn's sole source of water is a surface spring located about 1/2 mile above the Inn. Water is collected from the spring and stored in a large storage tank. The water is treated and flows downhill from the tank to the Inn. In prior drought years, water flow from the spring slowed dramatically. If the Inn used more water than the spring could replenish, we would eventually be without water, and the Inn would need to close. The spring is currently flowing at 1.5 gallons/minute (2,160 gallons/day). Earlier in the year, the flow rate was 5-6 gallons/minute. With the current overnight capacity limits, the Inn can use approximately 300 gallons/day. For the moment, we are OK, but if the spring flow decreases, the Inn could be in serious trouble. Water usage is one reason why the deck bathrooms remain closed to the general public. As you can imagine, bathroom usage by hundreds of hikers and bikers per day would increase the water usage significantly. As I mentioned in the last Newsletter, the Board would like to form a Committee focused on this water issue, and is looking for interested volunteers. We would especially seek volunteers with geology or mechanical/civil engineering experience. If you would like more information or would like to join this new Committee, please send an email to: [president@westpointinn.com](mailto:president@westpointinn.com).

The six-burner gas range and oven in the kitchen has served the Inn well over the years, but it does have some issues. There are seven pilots that burn continuously, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. We estimate that these pilot lights consume approximately \$1,500 of propane per year. In addition, seven open pilot lights in a wooden kitchen/building present an increased fire risk. In order to reduce our propane expense and to eliminate this particular fire risk, the Board of Directors has approved the purchase of a new six-burner Wolf range with electronic ignition. We are expecting the new range to be delivered and installed by the end of this year.

The Board of Directors has initiated a 30-Year Reserve Study using the services of Architectural Resources Group, an architecture firm focused on historical preservation. A 30-Year Reserve Study is a tool to inventory, assess and project the

financial needs of the Association over the next 30 years. There are generally two parts to the project: (1) perform a physical inspection of all of the structures and systems at the Inn, and (2) create a funding plan that will be adequate to cover all of the maintenance, replacement and upgrades that are required over the next 30 years. When complete, this Study will be used by the Board to set realistic budgets for the Inn and to support major fundraising campaigns.

Finally, a reminder that the fall Members' Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 17. Due to the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, we are unsure if the meeting will be in-person at the Inn or virtual via Zoom. The Board will make a decision over the next month regarding the meeting format. Whatever the format, I encourage all members to participate.

## INNKEEPERS REPORT

### Lin Marcuse & Fran Rondeau

We want to thank our Innkeepers, who have been working out the kinks with our guests as we ramp up to 50% occupancy with a shared kitchen once again. They have been intrepid stewards of the Inn while we navigate these uncharted waters.

However, we want to give a giant shout-out to John Slater, who was the Innkeeper-on-duty when a dangerous incident occurred on the mountain. On August 11, a vehicle caught fire at Middle Peak near the entrance to the old Air Force facility. The flames soon spread to the surrounding vegetation, causing a small wildland fire. John did a great job keeping the guests calm while also maintaining contact with Emergency Services to keep informed if evacuation became necessary, which thankfully didn't happen. While John was able to keep in touch via phone, sometimes well-meaning members interrupted when they called in to check on the status of the Inn and guests. So, if you hear the Inn is somehow in danger, please keep the phone lines clear for emergency communications only. Thank you for your understanding and THANK YOU JOHN!

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

Don Keeley

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The West Point Inn Association has four sources of income: (1) overnight fees paid by guests, (2) fundraisers, such as Pancake Breakfasts, (3) donations and (4) annual membership dues. Of these four sources of income, annual membership dues are the only predictable source of income.

During these difficult times brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Board of Directors has worked to reduce monthly operating expenses as much as possible. During calendar year 2020, the Inn had no overnight guests for nine months and no fundraisers. In order to meet our monthly expenses, the Board had to rely solely on annual membership dues and the generous donations from members and non-members.

During calendar year 2021, the Inn has been able to reopen to overnight guests on a limited basis, with much higher fees. Even with these higher overnight fees, our income from overnight guests is only 50% of the pre-pandemic level. In August, the Inn held the first Pancake Breakfast fundraiser since 2019, but attendance was low and we were only able to cover our expenses. Although we have some income from overnight guests, annual membership dues remain an important source of income.

Membership dues were last increased in 2005. The Board of Directors is sensitive to the fact that no one wants to pay more for something, and also acknowledges that some members' incomes may have been impacted by the pandemic. However, the Board is also responsible for managing the fiscal affairs of the Association in a responsible and thoughtful way.

As required by the Bylaws, the Board of Directors will be proposing an increase to the annual membership dues for a vote at the October 17, 2021 Members' Meeting. All members present at the Meeting will vote on this proposed dues schedule. Unless the members present approve this membership dues proposal by a majority vote, the current dues will remain in effect until the next Members Meeting in October 2022.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Talia Friedman

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These past few months I have been busy bringing to Membership what many of you have asked: Less Paper! Alternative payment methods! Simpler communications! While it's a lot of front-end work, in the long term I expect the annual dues process to run more smoothly with significantly fewer volunteer hours - less time stuffing envelopes, more time hiking. The official launch will be in December in preparation for annual dues (as always due on January 31) but a Welcome Email with an opportunity to update you address and billing information, will start rolling out in October.

## PANCAKE BREAKFASTS

Gordy MacDermott & Lin Marcuse

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A BIG thank you to Fran Rondeau and Bonnie Jones for bringing back pancakes on the mountain after a nearly two-year hiatus! Fran & Bonnie lead a dedicated team that prepped and cooked pancakes for over 200 patrons that braved heat and smoke to come to the Inn for a wonderful breakfast. While not as successful as we had hoped (it was in the 90's with air quality in the 100's), this event did re-establish the Inn as a public destination on the mountain. We also want to thank Don Keeley and Joanne Devereaux for leading the cleanup efforts after the breakfast.

We want to thank and wish good luck to Nancy Fox, who will be co-hosting the September breakfast with Lin. And gratitude to Fran who, along with Lin, will be hosting for a second time in October. Appreciate the double duty. Also, thanks to all the volunteers who really make these fundraisers happen.

## TOBY CABIN REMODEL

Michael Jefferies & David Durr

The Toby floor project turned out to be a bigger project than initially planned. The degree of structural rot and poor previous construction was significant. The team, consisting of a general contractor, two laborers and myself, removed at least two yards of debris and soil from under the floor once about 50% of the total cabin floor was removed. Parts of animal skeletons and a family of scorpions were also discovered during the excavations. After removing the floor boards we completely rebuilt the sub floor with concrete, pier blocks, pressure treated beams and cross members. At the same time we used several pneumatic jacks to level the floor which was two inches out of level. Fortunately we were able to save and relay approximately 90% of the old flooring which had been painted red years ago. Now that David has laid a new floor on top of the old floor I propose that a work party build small retaining wall to hold back the hillsides to the rear and side of the Toby. A small retaining wall will prevent any further soil/debris from migrating to the Toby underfloor areas again.



*Our guests love the newly remodeled Toby so much that they don't want to leave!*



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION: CALL FOR CANDIDATES

## Chris and Lin Marcuse



The WPIA Board of Directors and Election Committee welcome inquiries from qualified members who might be interested in serving on the board. Here is some information:

- There are nine WPIA members on the Board of Directors.
- The term for a Director is three years.
- By-Laws require that a candidate be a member in good standing for no less than one year and who has not served on the Board for 12 months prior to taking office.
- By-laws state that the Nominating Committee consists of outgoing Board members and the President.
- By-laws state that any qualified member, other than those selected by the Nominating Committee, may run for the board by delivering a petition signed by at least 10% of voting members by September 1 (in this case, by 09/01/2021).

The election process is by mail. Candidates submit a short bio. An alphabetical list of candidates and their bios is printed in the Fall newsletter. Ballots and bios are mailed to the voting membership at least 30 days prior to the Annual Fall Meeting in October (10/17/2021) along with an addressed return envelope. Voting officially ends when the annual meeting is called to order. Votes are then tallied with results announced toward the end of the meeting. Results are kept confidential. Winners' names are announced alphabetically. IF THE INN OCCUPANCY IS STILL RESTRICTED IN OCTOBER, BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE PANORAMIC HWY MAILBOX BY 5 PM ON 10/16/2021. THE WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED DURING THE ONLINE MEMBERS' MEETING.

Serving on the Board of Directors is an excellent way to help the West Point Inn. Please consider sharing some of your time and talent to ensure that the Inn continues to operate for the benefit of the members and guests who appreciate the opportunity to experience our unique establishment.  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Don Keeley  
Chris Marcuse  
Jim Parton

ELECTION PROCESS COMMITTEE:

Lin & Chris Marcuse

NOTE: We welcome help from members in conducting the election. If interested, please contact us.

QUESTIONS IN GENERAL: Contact Chris or Lin PHONE: (415) 516-4253 or e-mail: elections@westpointinn.com

PLEASE CONTACT SOMEONE ON THE BOARD OR ELECTION COMMITTEE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN BECOMING A CANDIDATE FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

# SPRING SAVE THE INN DONORS LIST

## Chris Marcuse



We want to express our deep gratitude to everyone who has stepped up to help save the Inn in our time of need. Thanks to the donors listed below, we have reached our goal for our short-term needs! This will allow us to keep the Inn operating during the COVID pandemic until a vaccine becomes widely available. But we have longer term needs. Due to the pandemic, we have had to delay major capital projects that are important for the Inn's continued good health and well-being.

We apologize if you have donated but don't see your name listed here. We are doing our best to keep up with the paperwork and will acknowledge you in a future newsletter. However, every donation from \$5 online to \$25,000 bequests, is GREATLY appreciated.

Thank you ALL for saving the Inn!

West Point Inn Board of Directors

## AND A HUGE THANKS TO:

Bill Abright	Mary Chapman	Leah Durr	Marjorie Guillory
Dominic & Kyle Akin	John & Shelley Chesley	Rick Durr	Scott & Lisa Halsted
Dave Alley	Judy Chiosso-Glass	Terry & Kathleen Edeli	Jenny Hammer
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Gerald Audet	Dan Ciccarone & Kim	Ryan & Kristine Erving	Jennifer Hanley
Rob Badger	Koester	Charlie & Marji Evans	Gary Harbison
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## TOMATES PROVENÇALES

Fran Rondeau

Now that summer is almost over there is one thing we can still celebrate: a right now tomatoes are abundant, and at their sweetest now. This is a no fail classic recipe and comes from cookbook author Cecile Delarue. Use any mediterranean herbs you have available. Serve with your favorite wine, California or French!

- 8 medium round tomatoes, sliced in half
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly
- ground pepper
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
- 4 tablespoons bread crumbs
- 4 tablespoons finely chopped
- fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons thyme, fresh basil, and or oregano
- 1 tablespoon olive oil or more so each piece is moist
- 2 tablespoons of parmesan cheese

How to make Provence style tomatoes

1. Add the salt, and the pepper to the tomatoes. Place them on a large plate with the seasoned-side down so the water soaks out. Set aside for 15 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, combine the garlic with the bread crumbs, parsley, and all herbs.
3. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
4. Place a sheet of parchment paper over a baking sheet. Then place the halved tomatoes on the parchment paper. Using a tablespoon, place the herb and garlic mixture over each tomato. Sprinkle bread crumbs on top.
5. Pour 1 tablespoon of olive oil and sprinkle the parmesan over the tomatoes and put in the oven for 20 minutes.

Bon Appétit

Fran Rondeau (having made a few modifications to the original recipe)



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Jim Parton

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**P.O. Box 796**  
**San Anselmo, CA 94979**

*The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.*



**CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR EMAIL?**

**PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO**

**BY SENDING AN EMAIL TO:**

**[MEMBERUPDATE@WESTPOINTINN.COM](mailto:MEMBERUPDATE@WESTPOINTINN.COM)**

**WANT TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE?**

**PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS**

**AND PHOTOS TO**

**[EDITOR@WESTPOINTINN.COM](mailto:EDITOR@WESTPOINTINN.COM)**